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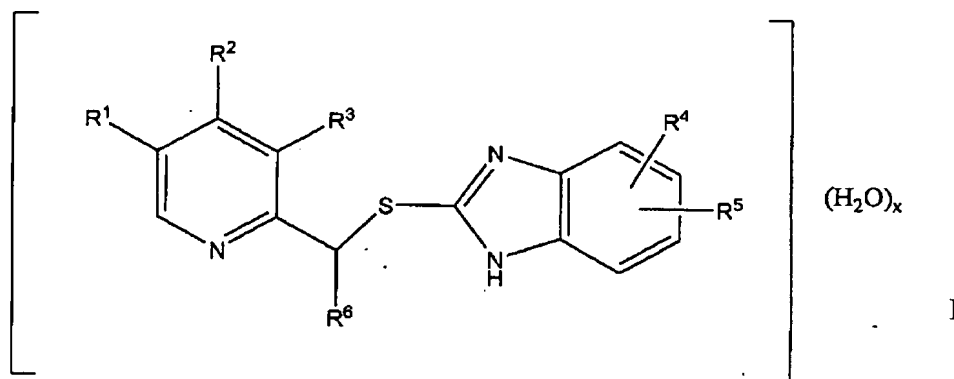
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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A crystal of optionally substituted 2-(2-pyridinyl) methylthio-1H-benzimidazole hydrate of the following structural formula I



in which

R¹, R² and R³, identical or different, denote hydrogen, a C1-C8 alkyl, C3-C8 cycloalkyl, C2-C8 fluoroalkyl or C1-C8 alkoxy moiety,

R⁴ and R⁵, identical or different, denote hydrogen, a C1-C8 alkyl, C3-C8 cycloalkyl, CH₂-C3-C8 cycloalkyl, C1-C8 alkoxycarbonyl, C1-C8 alkoxy, C1-C8 fluoroalkoxy, CF₃-, C2-C8 fluoroalkyl or C(O)O-C1-C8 alkyl moiety and

R⁶ denotes hydrogen or a C1-C2 alkyl moiety and

x means 0.5-2.

2. (Previously Presented) A crystal according to claim 1, in which

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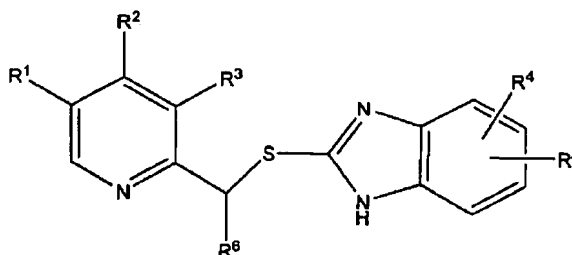
Amendment Under 37 CFR § 1.116 filed November 13, 2007

R^1 , R^2 and R^3 , identical or different, denote hydrogen, a C1-C3 alkyl or C1-C3 alkoxy moiety,

R^4 and R^5 , identical or different, denote hydrogen, a C1-C3 alkoxy, C1-C3 fluoroalkoxy moiety and

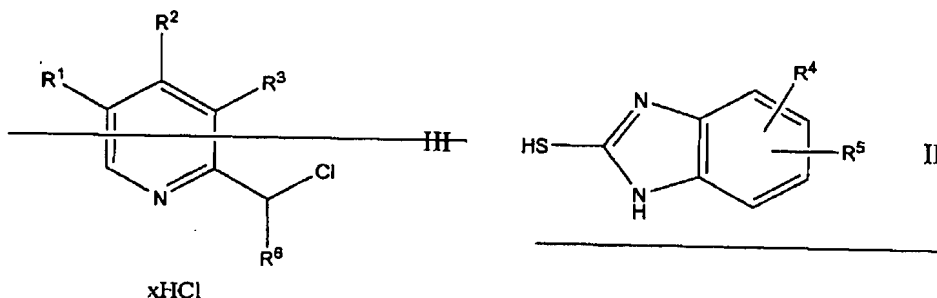
R^6 denotes hydrogen and x means 0.5-2.

3. (Previously Presented) A crystal according to claim 1, in which R^1 denotes a methyl group, R^2 a methoxy group, R^3 a methyl group, R^4 hydrogen, R^5 a methoxy group in position 5 and R^6 hydrogen and x means 0.5-2.
4. (Currently Amended) A crystal according to claim ~~1~~, in 1, in which R^1 denotes hydrogen, R^2 and R^3 in each case denote a methoxy group, R^4 denotes hydrogen, R^5 a difluoromethoxy group in position 5 and R^6 hydrogen and x means 0.5-2.
5. (Currently Amended) A process for ~~the isolation of a compound~~ isolating crystals of an optionally substituted 2-(2-pyridinyl)methylthio-1H-benzimidazole hydrate of formula I according to ~~one of claims claim 1~~, said process comprising:
 - a) providing from a reaction medium containing comprising (i) the free base of the structural formula:

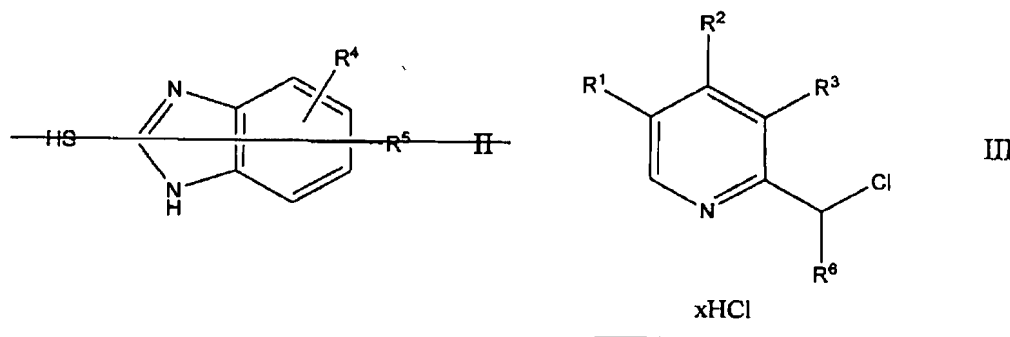


wherein R^1 - R^6 have the meaning given in claim 1; and (ii) a water-soluble, organic solvent;

- b) ~~at most partially removing the, characterised in that a~~ water-soluble, organic solvent present in the reaction medium; ~~is at most partially removed,~~
- c) ~~adding water is added~~ to the reaction medium at a temperature of below 40°C ~~water~~ in quantities of at least 55 wt.% of water, relative to the weight of the reaction medium, to form hydrates; [[, and]]
- d) ~~separating the hydrates formed are separated~~ as crystals; and
- e) ~~optionally purified in conventional manner~~ purifying the crystals
6. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 5, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the water is added in quantities of at least 70 wt.% relative to the weight of the reaction medium.
7. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 5, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the water is added in quantities of up to 75 wt.% relative to the weight of the reaction medium.
8. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 5, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the water is added at a temperature of 20-25°C.
9. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 5, ~~characterised in that an~~ unhydrated compound of the formula I was obtained wherein the free base in the reaction medium was prepared by a process comprising reacting a thiol-compound of the formula II;



with a reactive pyridine compound of the formula III:



in presence of at least one base, ~~wherein the residues R^1 - R^6 have the meaning stated in claim 1.~~

10. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 9, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the base is at least one member selected from the group consisting of sodium and [[/or]] potassium hydroxide was used as the base.
11. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 5, ~~characterised in that the~~ unhydrated compound of the formula I was wherein the free base is initially dissolved in a water-miscible, organic solvent.
12. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 5, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the water-miscible, organic solvent is an aliphatic alcohol, ~~preferably methanol, ethanol, propanol or butanol,~~ or an aprotic solvent, ~~preferably dimethylformamide, dimethyl sulf oxide, tetrahydrofuran,~~ or a ketone, ~~preferably acetone,~~ or a mixture of at least two of these solvents.
13. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 5, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the crystals are purified by washing with at least one of water and [[/or]] a solvent/water mixture, ~~preferably an alcohol/water mixture and/or a ketone/water mixture.~~
- 14.-16. (Canceled)